



SOCIAL STUDIES

Lesson

Lesson

3

UNIT 6 – History of the Caribbean Family

Comparison of Caribbean African and East Indian Family Experiences

INTRODUCTION

In previous lessons you looked at the family structures of both groups mentioned in the objective. You saw how one originated from slavery and the other from Indenture labour. You also learned how family structures and relationships persist today due to the past experiences of the Africans and East Indians.

OBJECTIVES

At the end of this lesson you will be able to:

Critically examine the experiences of Caribbean African and East Indian families, comparing their experiences.



Examine the table below outlining the Caribbean African and East Indian family experiences. Can you see any similarities or differences in their respective situations?

AFRICAN	EAST INDIAN
Brought to the Caribbean and families separated	Brought to the Caribbean, families kept together
Unions not recognized by law	Unions not recognized by law
Men and women had visiting unions as men were not allowed to live with families	Men and women lived in nuclear and extended families in one barrack range
Marriages were not predominant in African societies	Marriages were performed under religious rites but still not recognized by law

Were not given land to start and continue families, were forced to become squatters	Given plots of land to start and continue family life away from other ethnicities.
Today African descendants have nuclear families and visiting and common-law unions.	Today East Indian descendants live in nuclear and extended families.



ACTIVITY

Could you now draw your own table showing advantages and disadvantages the families of both groups faced?

	AFRICAN	EAST INDIAN
ADVANTAGES		
DISADVANTAGES		

CONCLUSION

Both the Africans and East Indians faced obstacles in establishing families. These were overcome with great persistence even though much of the past is still part of the present.